

OFFICE OF JOB CORPS

REGION IV

Career Development Services System Plan

July 1, 2004

INTRODUCTION

The Workforce Investment Act greatly expanded Job Corps' mission. We are no longer a job training program with responsibility for our students ending when we place them on their first job. We are now a Career Development Services System and our responsibility is not just to train our students for entry into the workforce, but to support their transition into the workforce and ensure their long-term employment. In order to accomplish this expanded mission, it has been necessary for Job Corps to reexamine and revise the way it does business.

The policies and requirements for all aspects of the Job Corps program as a Career Development Services System (CDSS) are set forth in the Job Corps Policy and Requirements Handbook (PRH). Within that basic framework, Regional Offices have been given the latitude and flexibility to interpret these policies, establish priorities and implement initiatives that will best meet these requirements given the geographic, demographic and facility configuration considerations characteristic of each Region. This document describes the interpretations, priorities and initiatives that are unique to Region IV. Taken together, they represent the Region's CDSS Plan. The CDSS Plan is supplemented by a series of Regional Directives and Regional Information Notices, which provide specific instructions on procedural and technical matters.

Region IV now encompasses 24 Job Corps Centers in 11 States serving 9600 students at any one time. Specific information on each of these centers is available on the new Region IV website – www.jobcorpsregion4.org .

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Region IV has adopted the following principles which we use to guide all of our decisions and actions. We expect these principles will also guide the decisions and actions of our Job Corps centers and other entities providing services to students in the Region.

- Employability literally means, “the ability to be employed.” Therefore, everything we do in Job Corps to prepare students for employment is employability training. To be more precise, we believe that the ability to be employed requires three specific sets of skills: **social skills, academic skills and vocational skills**. We also believe that, of these three skill sets, social skills are the most important because if students can't show up on time ready for work, take direction from a supervisor/follow instructions and get along with co-workers and customers, it doesn't matter how many diplomas they have or how technically competent they are in a particular trade or occupation. They will not be able to remain employed.

- While Job Corps has historically described itself as an open entry/open exit, self-paced program, this does not mean students come to Job Corps, progress in Job Corps and leave Job Corps as they please. We obviously determine their eligibility and suitability for participation in the program and manage their arrival at a Job Corps center. We are equally responsible for managing their progress through the program and their separation from the program. We call this process **Managing the Flow** and it is critical to the successful operation of Job Corps centers and the Job Corps program.
- Our students are active partners in their career development – not passive recipients of it. This means they must be given the opportunity to actively participate in the planning and implementation of their personal career development plan and in all scheduling decisions in order to ensure that they are empowered to take ownership of and responsibility for their own success. This approach embodies the Job Corps proverb, “Every time we provide a service to or make a decision for our students, we deprive them of the opportunity to learn by doing this for themselves.”
- Every student has the right to feel safe at all times while on a Job Corps center and to always be treated with dignity and respect. Everything else they get in Job Corps, to include services, benefits and privileges, they have to earn. This means that not every student will get the same services, benefits or privileges in Job Corps. What they get out of Job Corps will be dependent upon what they put into it. As Job Corps students throughout the nation so wisely and frequently acknowledge, Job Corps is what you make it
- Most people don’t live to work; they work to live; and they do this because they have learned from experience that working, and particularly working hard and doing the right thing, makes their lives better. Many of our students have not learned this lesson. This means that the Job Corps experience must be structured so that students experience their lives getting better when they work hard and do the right thing. Students must earn more respect, responsibility, trust, privileges and amenities when they do the right thing. If they don’t, then we are teaching them the exact opposite of what we want them to learn.
- The transition of students from one phase of the program to the next (OA to CPP to CDP to CTP) is viewed in this Region as a handoff and likened to the passing of a baton in a relay race. In a relay race, one doesn’t just drop the baton off at the end of his/her leg for the next runner to pick up. The baton is handed to the next runner and for a period of time both the giver and the taker of the baton are holding on to it. The giver doesn’t let go until he/she is certain the taker has it under his/her control. If this

doesn't happen, the baton will be dropped and the race will be lost. This is the standard against which all transitions are measured in this Region.

- Would you send your child to your Job Corps center if you weren't there to look out for him/her? This is the standard against which center culture is measured in this Region.
- If you owned your own business, would you hire Job Corps graduates (assuming they had been trained in the vocational skills you need?) If there are some graduates at your center that you would not hire, then those students are not ready to enter the workforce and you shouldn't ask or expect anyone else to hire them either. This is the standard against which center performance is measured in this Region.
- Job Corps students are not in Job Corps to justify our jobs or our program. We are here to serve them. Our role is **NOT** to fit the students into our program. It is to select from the many and diverse resources we have at our disposal to build an individualized program around each student that will best assist that student in meeting his/her career goals. Our job is to do **whatever it takes** to ensure our students' success, **as long as it's legal and ethical**.

OUTREACH AND ADMISSIONS

All of the Job Corps centers in Region IV are responsible for the outreach functions in their immediate geographic area as described in the PRH. The Region requires that the business and community liaison functions outlined in the PRH be organized and coordinated and that each center have an active and effective Community Relations Council (CRC) and Industry Advisory Council (IAC). The CRC is expected to bring added value to the center and to students' learning experiences. The IAC is expected to advise the center on the selection and content of vocational offerings as well as help identify work-based learning and employment opportunities for students.

Some centers have also been given responsibility for some or all of the admissions functions related to their centers. Outreach and admissions functions not performed by centers are performed by outreach and admissions contractors, all but one of which is selected through a competitive procurement process. Which entity provides arrivals to which center(s) is described in the Region IV Geographic Assignment Plan (GAP.) The over-riding consideration in developing the GAP was to try to keep students as close to home as possible while still providing them with the kind of training they want.

Regardless of which contractor or agency actually pays the salaries of the admission counselors in the field, they work for the Job Corps center or centers

they serve and their job is to keep those centers full with eligible, suitable, motivated students. They are expected to know all about the centers they serve by periodically visiting those centers, regularly communicating with those centers and having strong working relationships with those centers. The Job Corps centers in the Region are equally responsible for making certain that the admission counselors providing them with students have all the information they need to effectively screen and prepare students for their experience at the particular center to which they are being assigned. All admission counselors are expected to develop working relationships with local One-Stop Career Centers and ensure that, at a minimum, Job Corps services are included on the menu of services available through the one-stop system.

The Region's recruitment strategy is based on identifying a sufficient number of eligible and suitable applicants to create waiting lists for each center. While applicants are waiting to be assigned to a center, they are given simple instructions that they are expected to follow – like calling their admission counselor every Thursday afternoon. If they fail to follow the instructions they are dropped to the bottom of the waiting list. This strategy ensures that only the most motivated applicants will be assigned to a center. We do **NOT** assign applicants on a first come-first served basis. This must be explained to applicants when they are placed on the waiting list.

Consistent with PRH 1.3, Requirement 3, the Region expects that admissions counselors will provide or help applicants to acquire labor market information specific to their career interests and hometown or intended location of post-center residence. This should then be incorporated into the process of initiating the electronic Personal Career Development Plan (PCDP) with the applicant prior to enrollment.

All admissions counselors in the Region are expected to use the full range of promotional materials developed for the Region by its technical assistance/media support contractor, Cutting Edge Communications, Inc. These materials are described in the *Job Corps Region 4: Catalog of Promotional Materials*, which is available from Cutting Edge. Admissions counselors may supplement these materials with additional materials of their own design and choosing; however, they may not completely replace the regional materials with their own materials. In addition, admissions counselors may request specific, localized technical assistance from Cutting Edge in the form of staff training, media placement/media buy assistance and customized promotional materials development.

The Region supports the use of center tours for prospective applicants and their families and pre-arrival orientation sessions for prospective enrollees where such activities are feasible and cost effective. The Region also encourages centers to involve their students in developing center web-sites, which can stand alone and also be linked to the regional web-site maintained by Cutting Edge.

CAREER PREPARATION PERIOD

The Region has taken note that nowhere in the PRH does it state that the Career Preparation Period (CPP) must be 60 days in length. What the PRH does describe is a series of activities and learning objectives that all new students must complete within their first 60 days on center. The Region believes that it will take the average student 60 days to complete those requirements. However, we recognize that some students will require more or less time to complete the requirements.

In order to assist centers in communicating the function of CPP to new students, the Region has developed a short video (also available as a DVD) titled *Welcome to Job Corps*, which explains and dramatizes the importance of having a career plan and developing the social skills essential for employment in any trade or profession before embarking on one's "journey to the future." This video should be shown to all new students during their first full day on center. The video should also be shown to all staff, all admissions counselors, Community Relations and Industry Advisory Council members and be part of new staff orientation, so that all of these people will know what students are being told by the Region when they arrive on center and can reinforce and support that message. Admissions counselors can also show this video to applicants by prefacing it with the following statement - "This video is one of the first things the center will show you when you get there. I want you to see it now so that you will know what the center is going to tell you and expect of you before you make the final decision to enroll in Job Corps."

Given the importance of the activities and learning objectives required during CPP and the impact they have on a student's ability to participate in and benefit from the Career Development Period (CDP) of the program, the Region believes that all students should complete all the requirements of CPP before entering CDP, which means before being scheduled/assigned to academic and vocational classes, regardless of how long that takes.

The Region also places special emphasis on Section 2.8 of the PRH which requires that "each student's career management team shall conduct a formal evaluation prior to the student's entry into CDP "to ensure that students are fully prepared for successful participation in the Career Development Period." We believe this evaluation must include an assessment of students' social skills. Our expectation is that centers will require students to demonstrate their understanding of and willingness to use appropriate social skills in the workplace by showing up on time ready to work, taking direction/following instructions and getting along with others in CPP before they will be moved into CDP.

Finally, since Region IV has a large number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students, centers serving these students must make provision to ensure that

these students receive the benefit and meet all the requirements of CPP in an English as a Second Language (ESL) environment with a trained ESL Instructor.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT PERIOD

Counseling

Students' counselors are the travel agents for their "journey to the future." Counselors are expected to assist students in developing and meeting their individual goals and in managing their Personal Career Development Plans. The Region recommends that counselor caseloads be assigned by vocation and that counselors be required to visit their trades every day, thereby ensuring that they see their entire caseload each day.

Social Skills Training

Centers are expected to continue social skills training during CDP and reinforce those skills in all areas of the Job Corps program.

Academic Instruction

Having an education, which includes accumulated knowledge, the ability to apply that knowledge, as well as the ability to learn new information and skills, is arguably the most transferable employability skill. Obtaining a GED or High School Diploma is obviously very important, not just because that is one of things we measure in Job Corps, but because it is proof that the student has received an education. We must never lose sight of the fact that the credential is not an end in itself. It is the product of an education and it is the education that we are striving to provide for our students. Therefore, the academic programs at our centers must be designed and structured so that students can accumulate knowledge, practice applying that knowledge, further develop their ability to learn **and** obtain an appropriate credential.

It is a well established educational principle that young people learn better in context than they do in the abstract. This is why Job Corps stresses the use of an applied academic approach to its academic program, an approach which is strongly supported by this Region.

Additionally, research conducted recently by the Philadelphia Region confirmed what we have long known: that the majority of Job Corps students are kinesthetic learners, which means they learn best by doing. Therefore, academic classes must be participative and interactive; and teachers must make maximum use of manipulables, simulations, group activities and project based teaching/learning strategies.

Further research conducted for the Dallas Region by Brand Keys, Inc. found that Job Corps students are more motivated to acquire an education and obtain an academic credential when the academic program is directed toward their higher level needs (self-actualizations vs. survival as defined by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.) This means that staff and students must see the academic program, and represent it, as a way for students to realize their potential (be all they can be) and not just as a way to get a piece of paper that will add a few dollars to their paychecks. This means that the academic instruction provided at our Job Corps centers must be engaging, stimulating and challenging; and the substance of that instruction must be enriched with content that addresses current events, philosophy and the arts.

To assist centers in preparing their academic instructors to meet these expectations, Region IV has developed a teacher training program titled *Engaging for Success: Tapping Students' Values, Interests and Potential*. This program was introduced at a major academic conference in the fall of 2003. Additional copies of the materials developed for this training program are available upon request from the Regional Office. Centers are encouraged to use these materials as part of their teacher in-service training.

Region IV has been very active in supporting the National High School Diploma Initiative. We encourage our centers to be imaginative and creative in pursuing this initiative, but caution them to operate within the parameters of the new Job Corps concurrent enrollment policy that goes into effect on July 1, 2004.

The Region also recognizes that many of our students come from families and environments where education has not been valued. In fact, in many cases the reverse is true. Young people are made fun of and ostracized for being smart. We believe Job Corps must change that perspective if our students are to succeed in the academic program. We attempt to do that by conducting an extensive and elaborate academic competition each year, which we video stream in real time back to all of the centers. The event is called the Academic Olympics. It includes four individual subject matter competitions, a team competition and an oratory competition with scholarship money going to the winners. We also use this opportunity to showcase the best performing arts students in the Region at the Victory Party following the competition. The theme of the Academic Olympics is "It's cool to be smart," and we go to great lengths to make heroes of the Olympians in the eyes of their classmates in the hope of inspiring all Job Corps students in the Region to pursue academic excellence.

Vocational Training

Region IV has long been committed to providing vocational training in a work-based context. The concept of engaging local businesses to assist in training our students originated in this Region eight years ago and the first national employer partnership was developed in this Region.

Our vision of work-based learning begins on center and requires that vocational shops and classrooms be configured, and vocational instruction be designed, to replicate actual workplace conditions to the maximum extent possible. We view specific work-based learning assignments with employer-partners, both on and off-center, as serving a dual purpose. First, they are an opportunity for students to test their assumptions about the career they have chosen and their newly acquired employability skills (social, academic and vocational) in a real work setting. This only has value if centers, students and employer-partners agree to learning and work achievement goals in advance and if centers regularly and systematically receive structured feedback on the students from the work-based learning employer-partners and then take deliberate action on center to correct the deficiencies noted by the employer-partner in a student's employability skills. Second, work-based learning provides students with on-the-job experience that enhances both their resume/portfolio and their chances of success when they are eventually placed in a job.

We encourage centers to provide students with multiple, short term work-based learning assignments, both on and off center, during the course of their training and to seek paid work-based learning opportunities for those students whose skill levels merit monetary compensation. We caution centers, however, that work-based learning assignments must be directly related to a student's career choice and should not be confused with leisure-time employment or center support. Centers must maintain full accountability for students who are on work-based learning assignments, they must ensure that students maintain a schedule on center when not at their work-based learning location and they must comply with all of the requirements for work-based learning that are currently, and may subsequently, be set forth in the PRH.

We have noticed that since the implementation of CDSS and the establishment of CPP many centers find themselves with more vocational slots that they can realistically use. The Region, therefore, reserves the right to reallocate vocational slots in order to make the best use of center resources.

In addition, Region IV requires that all centers post the names and logos of their employer-partners at the entrance to the center and in the appropriate vocational classrooms and shops so that students, staff and visitors from the community are made aware of these partnerships.

Student Code of Conduct and Incentive System

Region IV strongly advocates a behavior management approach to student conduct. We believe that students must experience the negative consequences of inappropriate behavior and the positive consequences of appropriate behavior if they are to develop the self-discipline necessary to behave appropriately in the workplace and in the community when they leave Job Corps. This philosophy inextricably links the center's Student Code of Conduct (sometimes called the

Disciplinary System) with its Incentive System. Students should be given every opportunity to **learn** from their mistakes.

Region IV recognizes positive peer pressure as an effective behavior management strategy. However, we also recognize the ineffectiveness and potentially dangerous consequences of negative peer pressure (also called mass punishment.) Consequently, we do **not** condone the use of mass punishment on our Job Corps centers.

There is a large body of information available on behavior management, including many innovations and techniques developed and/or adapted in this Region specifically for Job Corps centers. The Regional Office can identify resources and provide training and technical assistance to centers that want to learn more about applying these innovations and techniques to their Student Code of Conduct and Incentive Systems. There are, however, two specific initiatives that have proven their value through extensive pilot testing in the Region that the Region strongly encourages centers to adapt for their own use.

The Gold Card Incentive System

An incentive system can only be effective if, 1) everyone in the system knows exactly what he/she has to do to earn the incentive award, 2) the incentive award is highly valued and 3) everyone knows who has, in fact, earned incentive awards. Most of the incentive systems we have seen used in Job Corps fail to meet one or more of these criteria. The Gold Card System meets all three of the criteria, plus it costs next to nothing and requires very little staff time to administer. Most important of all, it works.

The system is driven by the Evaluation of Student Progress (ESP), which must be administered at least every 60 days and evaluates student progress across all major career development areas. The center establishes the threshold for the award based on the percentage of students it feels should receive the award in order to drive student behavior and maintain a positive center culture.

Every student whose ESP score exceeds the threshold is given a personalized Gold Card by the counselor conducting the ESP and the student's file is so noted. The card has an expiration date on it, which is the date of the student's next scheduled ESP. Possession of a Gold Card entitles the holder to specific privileges agreed upon by center management and student government and thereby grants the holder a certain elevated status among students. Status is highly prized among students. In fact, the value of money is that it conveys status or buys things that convey status. If you can get the status without money, you don't need the money (i.e. If you have good credit, you don't need cash.)

The student must show a valid Gold Card in order to obtain the privileges, so no additional record keeping is necessary. If students lose their cards, they have to

earn another one at their next ESP before they can enjoy the privileges. If a student forfeits his/her Gold Card as a sanction for inappropriate behavior, he or she not only loses the privileges, but must wait a full evaluation period before being eligible to earn another one.

The Redirect Program

Region IV developed the concept of a redirect program and piloted tested it at the Tulsa Job Corps Center for many years. Its success was unprecedented. We have discontinued the pilot and now encourage all centers with a significant number of disciplinary terminations to apply the best practices learned from the pilot to their Student Code of Conduct or Disciplinary System.

The final level (prior to actual termination from Job Corps) of a progressive disciplinary system has traditionally consisted of placing a student on probation. This has amounted to little more than warning the student that any further behavioral problems will result in termination from the program. What we are proposing is that centers replace probation as a warning with a highly structured, peer driven, 60 day redirect program patterned after the Tulsa Redirect Program. If students do not meet the requirements of the program and demonstrate appropriate changes in their behavior during the 60 day period, they are terminated for the offense that originally led to their being placed in the redirect program.

Centers in the Region will have considerable latitude and flexibility in designing their own redirect programs. Training and technical assistance in developing a redirect program are available from the Regional Office upon request.

Residential Living and Recreation

The roles of residential living and recreation in Job Corps have changed drastically under CDSS. They are no longer “warehousing” or “baby sitting” functions that take place between training days. They are part of the training day and, as such, must have learning objectives associated with them. Residential living and recreation provide excellent opportunities for students to develop personal and interpersonal social skills, leadership skills, leisure time interests and hobbies and to express athletic and artistic talents – all of which enhance self-confidence and self-esteem.

The Region believes that the key to successful residential living and recreation programs on Job Corps centers is flexibility. **One size does NOT fit all.** More mature students don’t need the structure and supervision that less mature students may need. This diversity should be reflected in a variety of residential living options offering progressive levels of independent living and self-governance. Physical activity is important, but should not be the sole function of

a recreation program. Cultural, artistic and intellectual activities should be provided as well.

The Region expects our centers to provide a home-like setting for students in the dormitories and to have a varied and flexible array of supervised leisure time activities available to stimulate, engage and entertain them. In order to provide the broadest range of activities for our students, we encourage centers to replace full-time recreation staff with part-time specialists who have varied skills and interests. Ten people working four hours a week can provide a much more flexible and varied recreation program than can one person working eight hours a day five days a week.

The Region has supported totally self-governed dorms where the students develop their own charter and manage their own dormitory according to that charter, co-ed dorms, dorms with refrigerators that stock their own snacks which are available to students 24 hours a day, a folklorico ballet, fencing and boxing classes, a USGA sanctioned golf program, a robotics program, foreign and native language classes, music lessons, cooking classes, an equestrian program with the horses stabled on center and even a competitive pistol team. With proper planning and competent supervision, there is very little that students might want to do that the Region won't support.

Student Leadership Training and Student Government

Region IV believes that student government should be an integral part of center management and that student leadership training should be geared to prepare students for positions in student government. We expect student government to be directly involved in making and enforcing center policies and rules; identifying, advocating and addressing student needs and student related problems; representing the center and the student body in the community; and participating in the day to day operation of the center.

We further expect that the center's student government association (SGA,) or its equivalent, will be structured and operated in such a way that students who participate in student government will not only develop leadership skills, but will also learn how the process of government works in a democratic society. In addition, we require that all centers provide their SGA with an up-to-date **copy of the PRH.**

However, we see the formal SGA required by the PRH, as being only a part of the total student government experience on center. We expect this experience to include dormitory leadership, some form of student court, other leadership programs such as student mentors or student ambassadors, entrepreneurial activities and an open, student-run, student-oriented newspaper that provides students with a voice in their Job Corps community.

CAREER TRANSITION PERIOD

Integration of career transition services from the former Denver and Dallas Regions has presented the most significant challenge in the regional consolidation process. Many procedures and protocols have not been worked out yet and will remain unchanged until such time as they can be revised and incorporated into this plan. The following information refers only to those procedures and protocols that have been established at this time, with the understanding that additional information will be forthcoming as it is developed.

Region IV views the Career Transition Period (CTP) and the provision of Career Transition Services (CTS) as the final stage in a continuum of services that begins when an applicant applies for enrollment in Job Corps - and the Personal Career Development Plan (PCDP) is the thread that ties that continuum of services together. By the time students reach CTP, they should have a clear sense of where they are going and what they are going to do next; and they should have acquired all of the skills and experiences they need to convert their PCDP into a first job and then a career. They should also know what kind of assistance Job Corps can provide them as they transition into the workforce and how to access and make the best use of that assistance. We expect each center to have a system in place to determine when students have met these requirements.

The Region recognizes that our ability to provide transition services to students who have left the program is dependent upon the former students' willingness to let us help them. This makes it essential that CTP be built upon the establishment and maintenance of constructive, mutually beneficial relationships with our students. We can't alienate them and then expect them to seek our assistance, take our advice, or return our calls. This premise is at the heart of our approach to CTP in this Region.

The Region believes the minimum requirements for an orderly exit from the Job Corps program by a graduate or former enrollee are that 1) the center knows where the student is going to be living, 2) the center knows where the student is going to be working or what the student is going to do to look for a job, 3) the student's transitional needs have been identified and a plan has been developed to address them and 4) the student has made contact with his or her assigned career advisor. Additional transition activities while a student is still enrolled in Job Corps, such as job-search assignments, participation in an exit readiness class or a final work-based learning assignment, are highly desirable, but we do not see them as essential to establish an orderly exit.

Each Job Corps center in the Region has either a JACS or WICS counselor on center. This person will be designated as the former enrollee case manager for the center and will be solely responsible for providing placement and follow-up

services to all former enrollees from that center, regardless of where the students go when they leave the center. Each center will have a CTS Code assigned by the Job Corps Data Center so that former enrollees from the center can be automatically assigned back to the center and placement information for those former enrollees can be entered by the center. All post-center services for former enrollees will be provided by telephone or e-mail, but can be enhanced by the JACS and/or WICS Volunteer Network. Larger centers may have to supplement the JACS/WICS counselor with center staff if their former enrollee caseload gets too large for one person to handle effectively.

Similar to the Region's outreach and admissions model, some centers in Region IV have direct responsibility for providing career transition services to their own graduates, while graduates from other centers are served by an independent CTS contractor. Wherever feasible, the entity that recruited the student will be the entity providing transition services.

In contrast to the services provided to former enrollees, which are almost entirely by phone, career transition services to graduates are expected to be provided face-to-face. Career advisors are encouraged to develop their caseloads into support groups, to connect the students on their caseload with the Job Corps Alumni Association and to identify community resources that can bring added value to their caseloads, both collectively and individually. Career advisors are also expected to be the central point of contact with the graduates on their caseloads. Center staff (such as transition coordinators, vocational instructors or career counselors,) National Training Contractor Coordinators and anyone else providing assistance to graduates are required to coordinate their activities with the student's assigned career advisor.

CENTER EFFECTIVENESS

Region IV envisions CDSS as a holistic approach to meeting students' career development needs. Determining the effectiveness of that approach involves tracking and analyzing a number of different elements – the most significant of these being student outcomes, student satisfaction, capacity utilization and quality of services as defined by the quality indicators in the PRH. There are national systems in place to measure each of these elements. However, there has been no tool available to look at the composite effect of all four measurement systems - no way of quantifying the synergy that is created by a holistic approach to CDSS.

Region IV, with the assistance of the Job Corps National Office, Division of Support and Accountability, has developed such a tool to meet this need. It is called the Job Corps Center Effectiveness Report (CER) and will be used in this Region as a management tool. It will also be incorporated into the Region IV Regional Awards Plan.

The CER averages every center's 12 month OMS rating, its Cumulative OBS, the average of its last four Student Satisfaction Survey Safety Ratings and its most recent Quality Rating converted to a percentage. All of the centers in the nation are then ranked by their center effectiveness rating and that ranking is compared to their OMS ranking. The result provides a very different picture of center effectiveness than looking only at the OMS Ranking Report - a picture that we believe is more accurate and more useful than the picture provided by the OMS Ranking Report alone.

The Region considers the CER to be a work in progress. We fully expect that it may be adjusted over time as the result of continuing discussions between the regional office and center operators about how the tool can best be shaped and used to improve overall center and regional performance.

CENTER CDSS PLANS

The PRH requires all Job Corps Centers to develop a comprehensive CDSS Plan that describes how the center will meet the requirements for CDSS set forth in the PRH. These plans must be submitted to the Regional Office for approval and updated as needed. Region IV further requires that all center CDSS Plans be consistent with the interpretations, priorities and initiatives set forth in this Region IV CDSS Plan.

Questions regarding the Region IV CDSS Plan and/or requests for training or technical assistance related to the implementation of this plan should be addressed to June Boswell, Operations Division Chief, Office of Job Corps, Region IV, 525 Griffin Street, Room 403, Dallas, TX 75202, Tel. (214) 767-2567, e-mail: boswell.june@dol.gov.